



SENATE BILL 310: OHIO DANGEROUS WILD ANIMAL ACT

Summary & Key Provisions

In order to ensure the safety of the public and ensure animals are treated humanely across the state, the Ohio Dangerous Wild Animal Act makes changes to Ohio law regarding the ownership, sale and permitting of dangerous wild animals and restricted snakes.

Prior to passage of Senate Bill 310 (Balderson), Ohio laws regulating animal ownership were among the weakest in the country. Following the tragic events that took place in Zanesville, Ohio in October 2011, Governor John R. Kasich, the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA), and the Ohio Legislature worked with stakeholders to craft legislation to prevent such tragic events from occurring again.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE OHIO DANGEROUS WILD ANIMAL ACT:

- Unpermitted ownership of dangerous wild animals and restricted snakes will be **banned** in the State of Ohio effective January 1, 2014;
- Offering dangerous wild animals and restricted snakes for sale by auction will be prohibited **immediately** after the law becomes effective;
- Acquiring, buying, selling, trading, or transferring possession of a dangerous wild animal without a proper permit will be prohibited;
- Allowing a permitted or registered dangerous wild animal or restricted snake to roam off the property where it is confined will be **illegal**, punishable as a first degree misdemeanor for a first offense and as a felony for any subsequent offenses; and
- Anyone who knowingly releases a dangerous wild animal or restricted snake into the wild **will be charged with a felony**.

Dangerous wild animals

Large cats	Rhinos
Bears	Alligators
Elephants	Crocodiles
Certain monkeys	

Restricted snakes

Anacondas and pythons (longer than 12 ft)
Certain vipers
Certain venomous snakes

REGISTRATION

- After the Ohio Dangerous Wild Animal Act becomes effective on September 03, 2012, owners of dangerous wild animals and certain restricted snakes in Ohio will be required to register their animals with ODA. Registrations must be received no later than November 02, 2012.
 - Unless exempted, **the law requires all animals to be micro-chipped** at the time of registration.
 - Unless exempted, anyone wishing to possess a dangerous wild animal or restricted snake after January 1, 2014 **must apply for an applicable permit** (see below) and demonstrate they meet the permit requirements.
- ODA will maintain a database of the name and address of each person that possesses a registered dangerous wild animal until January 1, 2014, and of each person issued a permit under the bill on and after that date.

PERMITS

- Anyone applying for a permit to keep a dangerous wild animal or restricted snake will be required to meet **strict caging, fencing and public signage requirements**. They must also carry **liability insurance or a surety bond** to cover any costs associated with an injury or property destruction caused by their animals; and
- Owners of venomous snakes will be required to maintain access to anti-venom for every poisonous snake in their possession. Owners will be liable for costs associated with the treatment of a bite.

Types of Permits

- Wildlife shelter permit – Owner does not intend to breed the animal(s) or acquire new animal(s)
 - Permit application fee: \$250 - \$1,000 (+ \$125 for every animal over 15 animals)
 - Liability insurance or surety bond requirement: \$200,000 - \$1 million
- Wildlife propagation permit – Owner intends to breed the animal(s) **solely for the purposes of a species survival program** and does not intend to acquire new animal(s)
 - Permit application fee: \$1,000 - \$3,000
 - Liability insurance or surety bond requirement: \$200,000 - \$1 million
- Restricted snake possession permit – Owner does not intend to breed, sell, trade or otherwise transfer the animal(s)
 - Permit application fee: \$150
 - Liability insurance or surety bond requirement: \$100,000 - \$500,000
- Restricted snake propagation permit – Owner intends to breed, sell, trade or otherwise transfer the animal(s)
 - Permit application fee: \$300
 - Liability insurance or surety bond requirement: \$100,000 - \$500,000
- Rescue facility permit – Designated as a rescue facility where abused, neglected, unwanted, impounded, abandoned, orphaned, or displaced dangerous wild animals are provided care for their lifetime or released back to their natural habitat
 - Permit application fee: \$500 - \$2,000
 - Liability insurance or surety bond requirement: Not defined in statute

EXEMPTIONS (*Registration Only, No ODA Permit Required*)

- Accredited Association of Zoos and Aquariums facility
- Accredited Zoological Association of America facility
- Research facility as defined in federal Animal Welfare Act
- Research facility accredited by Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International
- U.S.D.A. licensed Circus
- Veterinarians providing temporary care
- Wildlife shelters accredited by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries
- Individuals travelling through the state who are not in the state for more than 48 hours and who do not exhibit the animal(s) or allow them contact with the public
- Educational institution that displays a single dangerous wild animal as a mascot
- Persons or facilities possessing certain Ohio Department of Natural Resources permits
- Service capuchin monkeys trained by non-profit organizations
- Certain non-human primates